

# UNIT 1

## Make Small Talk

### PREVIEW

From: ROWAN PAPER INTERNATIONAL  
Sent: January 2, 22:50:56 PM GMT  
To: All Affiliates  
Subject: Annual Meeting: Bangkok, Thailand, March 24-27

**Meeting Etiquette**

Since we all come together from different traditions and cultures, here are some guidelines to make this meeting run smoothly:

- Please arrive promptly for meetings.
- Dress in business casual: no ties or jackets required. However, no denim or shorts, please. Women should feel free to wear skirts.
- Please refrain from making or taking calls, or texting during meetings. Put all phones on vibrate mode. If you have an urgent call, please step outside into the corridor.
- Note: Please treat everyone on a first-name basis.

Please food to international style. All meals will provide non-meat options. If you have a special dietary requirement, please speak with Ms. Penelope at the front desk.

See attached meeting agenda for advance planning.



ROWAN PAPER INTERNATIONAL	
Agenda-March 24	
8:30 Breakfast buffet	Salon Bangkok
9:15 Welcome and opening remarks Philippe Martin, President and CEO	Ballroom
9:45 Fourth quarter results and discussion Angela de Groot, CFO	Ballroom
10:30 Coffee break	
11:00 International outlook and integrated marketing plans Regis McGeehan	
12:00 Luncheon	Ballroom
2:00 Regional marketing plans • U.S. and Canada Group • Mexico and Central America Group • Caribbean Group • South America (Brazilian Core and Andes) Group • Brazil	Salon A Salon B Salon C Salon D Salon E

### COMMUNICATION GOALS

1. Make small talk.
2. Describe a busy schedule.
3. Develop your cultural awareness.
4. Discuss how culture changes over time.



PHOTO STORY Read and listen to a conversation between two participants at the meeting in Bangkok.



Teresa: Allow me to introduce myself. I am Teresa Segovia from the Santiago office. Sawatdee-Kas.  
Surat: Where did you learn the word? You're Chilean, aren't you?  
Teresa: Yes, I am. But I have a friend in Chile from Thailand.

Surat: Well, Sawatdee-Khrab. Nice to meet you, Ms. Segovia. I'm Surat Leelapal.  
Teresa: No need to be so formal. Please call me Teri.  
Surat: And please call me Surat.  
Teresa: OK. Surat, do you mind my asking you a question about that, though?  
Surat: Not at all.

Teresa: Is it customary in Thailand for people to be on a first-name basis?  
Surat: Well, at company meetings in English, always. In other situations, though, people tend to be a little more formal. It's probably best to watch what others do. You know what they say: "When in Rome..."  
Teresa: Mm-hmm... "do as the Romans do!"

\*They greet each other with a gesture called the *wai* and by saying "Sawatdee-Kas" (women) / "Sawatdee-Khrab" (men).

### THINK AND EXPLAIN Answer the questions.

1. Why was Surat surprised about the way Teresa greeted him? How do you know he was surprised?
2. Why do you think Teresa decided to say "Sawatdee-Kas"?
3. What did Teresa mean when she said, "No need to be so formal"?
4. What do you think the saying "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" means?

### SPEAKING

PERSONALIZATION If you took a business or pleasure trip to another country, how would you like to be addressed? Complete the chart. Then discuss and explain your reasons to a partner.

I'd like to be called...	Always	In some situations	Never
by my title and my family name.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
by my first name.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
by my nickname.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I'd prefer to follow the local customs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### DISCUSSION Talk about the questions.

1. In your opinion, is it inappropriate for two people of very different status (such as a CEO and an assistant) to be on a first-name basis? Explain.
2. In general, when do you think people should use first names with each other? When should they use titles and last names? Explain your reasons.